United Nations CCPR/C/SR.2339

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Distr.: General
22 March 2006

Original: English

**Human Rights Committee**
**Eighty-sixth session**

**Summary record of the first part (public)* of the 2339th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 13 March 2006, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson*: Ms. Chanet

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* No summary record was prepared for the second part (closed) of the meeting.

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Opening of the session and statement by the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

1. **The Chairperson** declared open the eighty-sixth session of the Human Rights Committee.

2. **Mr. Ndiaye** (Director, New York Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights), speaking on behalf of the High Commissioner, said that a strategic management plan, based on the High Commissioner's plan of action of May 2005, had been issued in February 2006 setting out the areas of work on which the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) would focus during 2006 and 2007. Under the plan, OHCHR would work to achieve greater support for the implementation of treaty body recommendations at the national level and would help the treaty bodies to make their recommendations more concrete and targeted, thereby improving their capacity to monitor States parties' compliance and reducing the time frame for considering individual complaints. A strengthened capacity would be developed to provide legal advice to States parties in reviewing and modifying legislation in accordance with international human rights standards.

3. The strategic management plan, together with the plan of action, represented the OHCHR contribution to the far-reaching United Nations reform processes. It recognized both the vital need for OHCHR to be a reliable, professional, well-resourced and open partner in the field of human rights and the urgency of addressing contemporary human rights concerns. The 2005 World Summit had responded positively to the call for doubling regular budget for the resources for OHCHR over a five-year period, a commitment reflected in the approval of an unprecedented additional 91 posts in OHCHR in the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

4. OHCHR would also support processes to reform the treaty bodies, including harmonization of treaty-reporting procedures and provision of training for States parties in preparing an expanded core document. A technical working group composed of members from each treaty body had met in December 2005 and again in February 2006 to finalize the draft guidelines for an expanded core document and harmonized reporting to all treaty bodies, and the Committee would be hearing about the results from its representatives at those meetings. Several States parties had already opted to prepare their expanded core document, and Afghanistan, Angola and Timor-Leste, among others, had sought help from United Nations offices and agencies in developing more systematic reporting under the human rights treaties to which they were parties. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), acting under the authority given it by Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), had become the first United Nations agency or institution to submit a common core document and a treaty-specific report to the Human Rights Committee.

5. A concept paper regarding proposals for a unified standing treaty body was being prepared, following the online dialogue on treaty body reform and the High Commissioner's meetings with several of the treaty bodies and invitations to them to submit their views on the proposals. The Government of Liechtenstein was planning to hold a second meeting in Malburn in July 2006 on the proposed unified treaty body, which all treaty bodies would be invited to attend.

6. Since the Committee's eighty-fifth session, Zambia had submitted its third periodic report, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya its fourth periodic report, Chile its fifth periodic report and Ukraine its sixth periodic report. In the past few months Kazakhstan had ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; Indonesia had acceded to the Covenant; Canada had acceded to the Second Optional Protocol; and Turkey had ratified that Protocol. In light of the success of the seven previous treaty events to promote signature, ratification or accession of international treaties, another annual treaty event had been scheduled for September 2006, along with a high-level dialogue on international migration and development.

7. Conscious that greater publicity should be given to the work of treaty bodies, OHCHR was pleased to note that the Committee's Chairperson had re-instituted in-session briefings for the press with positive results. To respond to the need to make the Committee's jurisprudence more accessible and visible, OHCHR had continued the publication of the series *Selected Decisions of the Human Rights Committee under the Optional Protocol*; volume 6 had just been issued; volume 7 had been prepared and should be issued in June 2006; with the forthcoming preparation of volume 8 the series would be up to date.

8. Among its recent efforts to strengthen implementation of treaty bodies' recommendations, OHCHR had organized a regional follow-up workshop in Nairobi for representatives of government and civil society in Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia on good practices in implementing treaty body recommendations and had held a judicial colloquium, also in Nairobi, for senior level judges from those countries on the domestic application of international human rights norms, including the Committee's jurisprudence. Recently OHCHR had produced a DVD containing a film and extensive documentation on the work of the treaty bodies.

9. The vitality and creativity of the Committee in fulfilling its mandate deserved notice in the current process of United Nations reform. The change in the working methods under the Optional Protocol to enable the pre-sessional Working Group on Communications to declare a communication inadmissible, subject to confirmation by the full Committee without discussion in the absence of objection, was a healthy innovation but further innovations might be needed to deal with the growing backlog of communications. The establishment of a working group to rationalize the lists of issues on States parties' reports submitted under article 40 of the Covenant should also improve dialogue with States' delegations and the resulting concluding observations. The decision to open the consideration of follow-up activities on concluding observations to the public would enhance their visibility. Within OHCHR, plans had been drafted to upgrade follow-up on Views under the Optional Protocol in order to make follow-up activities more visible and to integrate parts of OHCHR, notably the regional teams, desk officers and field presences, more fully into follow-up activities; the Team Leader of the Petitions Unit would be providing the Committee with more details in the course of the session. Lastly, the Committee was to be commended for its openness to a key United Nations actor, the community of non-governmental organizations, exemplified by the decision to allocate a full day, rather than a morning, to formal briefings by non-governmental organizations.

10. He wished the Committee all success in the many and crucial activities scheduled for the session.

11. **The Chairperson** asked whether the Committee could be given any further information about the details of the proposal for a unified standing treaty body.

12. **Mr. O'Flaherty** asked whether the concept paper on the proposed unified treaty body would be available at some point during the Committee's current session. He was confident that the proposed second meeting in Malburn would be as useful as the first. Unfortunately it would coincide with the Committee's eighty-seventh session and he wondered whether the dates might be shifted to a weekend. Several weeks earlier, he had attended an expert workshop on reform of the United Nations human rights treaty monitoring bodies at the University of Nottingham Human Rights Law Centre and would circulate the report of that meeting.

13. **Mr. Ndiaye** (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that the concept paper was in the process of being translated, and it was hoped that it would be available before the end of the Committee's session. With regard to the July meeting in Malburn, a weekend schedule was being planned. The University of Nottingham Human Rights Law Centre was very active on human rights questions, and OHCHR would be interested in the results of the workshop.

**Adoption of the agenda** (CCPR/C/86/1)

14. *The agenda was adopted.*

**Organizational and other matters**

15. **The Chairperson** drew attention to the programme of work containing the schedule of meetings and took it that the Committee wished to adopt it, subject to any necessary scheduling changes.

16. *It was so decided.*

17. **Mr. Ando**, speaking as Chairperson/Rapporteur of the pre-sessional Working Group on Communications, reported that the Working Group had been able to consider 31 of the 36 draft recommendations on communications submitted to it. It had taken four decisions to declare communications admissible and seven decisions to declare communications inadmissible and had approved 20 draft recommendations on Views for transmittal to the Committee. Some of the draft recommendations were complex and would undoubtedly cause intense debate in the Committee.

18. **The Chairperson** reported that Norway had submitted written replies to the list of issues; its submission was being translated.

*The public part of the meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.*